

the missouri coalition

mcdv
against
domestic
violence

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Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence

- **Guiding Principle:** *Information gained is to be shared*
 - Education
 - Assistance
 - Alliance
 - Research
 - P. 38

A Key for Victims of Domestic Violence:

*Universal Screening and Service
Collaboration*

Behavioral Objectives of Workshop

- **LEARN** a framework for understanding the dynamics of domestic violence, including the 4 types of abuse, common misconceptions and the use of power and control
- **IDENTIFY** victims by developing a universal screening procedure and create a safe environment to disclose abuse
- **SERVE** victims by utilizing an empowerment model and identifying community resources for service collaboration

DEFINITION

KEY POINT

Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors that adults or adolescents use against their current or former intimate partners.

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Domestic violence occurs in intimate relationships where the perpetrator and the victim are currently or previously have been dating, living together, married or divorced. They might have children in common or not.



POWER & CONTROL

KEY POINT

Domestic violence is purposeful behavior. The batterer's pattern of abusive acts is directed at achieving compliance from or control over the victim.

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Tactics that work to control the victim are selectively chosen by the batterer. This power permeates many aspects of a victim's life.



The Use of Pronouns

- According to the two most comprehensive national studies by the U.S. Department of Justice on intimate partner violence, between 64 and 85 percent of the victims of domestic violence are women
- Men are responsible for the majority of these attacks
- Women experience more chronic and injurious physical assaults by intimate partners than do men
- This presentation will reflect the use of such pronouns
- This does NOT infer that all men are batterers, but that the overwhelming majority of batterers are male
- This should not detract from the understanding that, in some instances, the perpetrator might be female while the victim is male or of the same gender

MYTH: Domestic Violence is an Individual's Illness

- Domestic violence is NOT caused by stress, genetics, substance abuse, anger, behavior of the victims or problems in the relationship, mental illness or any other individual psychopathology
- Correlations may exist between these factors and domestic violence, but NOT causation
- Domestic violence is unlike any other crime
- Abusive behavior IS learned through observation, experience and reinforcement, culture, family, communities, schools and peer groups

MYTH: Batterers are “Out of Control” or Identifiable

- A batterer knows the abuse is wrong because he masks his abuse; it is rarely done in public or outside of the home, thereby, he exhibits extremely controlled behavior
- Most individuals who know the batterer will claim he is a very charming, loving individual and could never imagine him being abusive
- Often, the first time a woman is physically assaulted is while pregnant or during the honeymoon

Characteristics of Batterers

- Extreme dependency
- Extreme jealousy
- Poor impulse control
- Projects blame
- Witnessed abuse or abused as a child
- Substance abuse
- Extreme mood swings
- Views wife and children as objects
- Difficulty communicating
- Poor identification of feelings
- Lack of accountability or responsibility
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MYTH: Victims Exhibit Certain Characteristics

- Gender is the only common trait among victims
- Race, social class, education or any other variable do not predict the possibility of abuse
- Battering can happen to ANY female
- However, lower income women are more likely to reside in shelter since they tend to have less access to resources

MYTH: Some Women Stay Because They Like the Violence

- Fear of insanity
- Isolation
- No place to go
- Unaware of resources
- Learned behavior
- Societal attitudes
- Traditional value system
- Fear the loss of children
- Low self-esteem
- Economic dependence
- Keeping the family together
- Guilt
- Promises of change
- Emotional dependence
- Fear of death
- P. 8

History of Domestic Violence Laws

- Code of Hammurabi
- Holy Roman Empire
- British Common Law
- American Law
- Contemporary Missouri Law

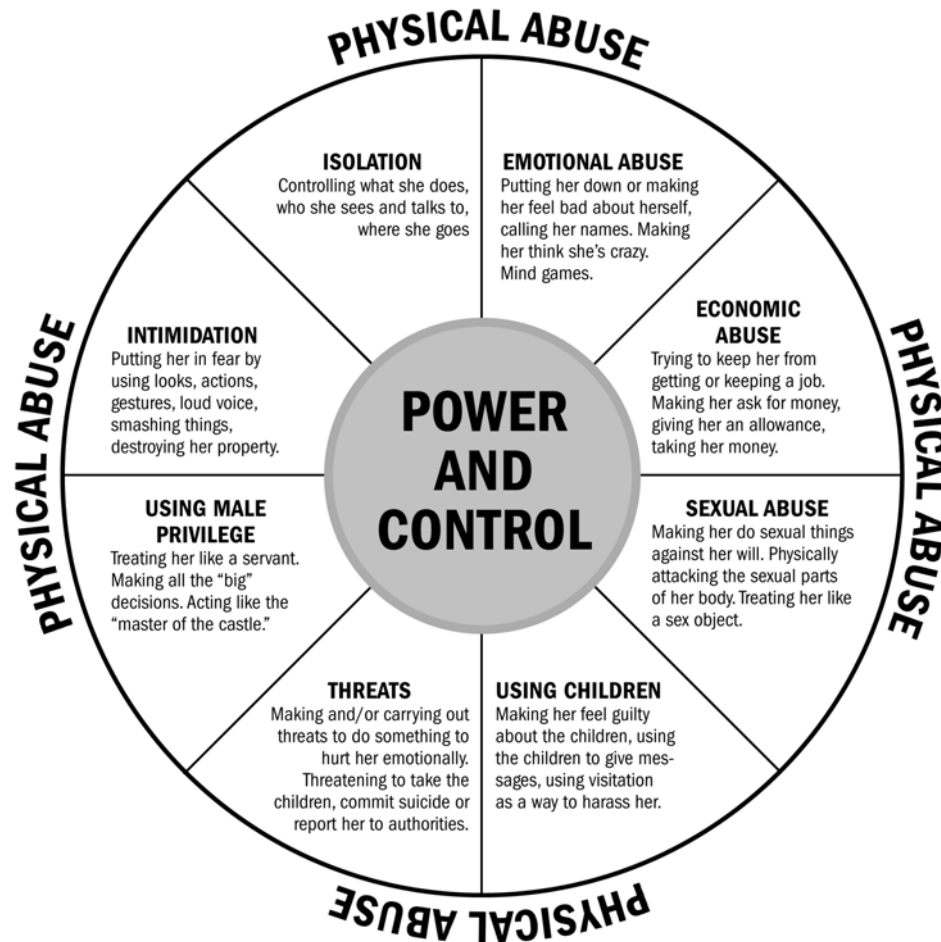
Types of Abuse

- **PHYSICAL:** This is the easier abuse to recognize and understand
- **RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE:** These events can be extremely difficult for victims to talk about because of the unimaginable ways in which this type of abuse is often perpetrated
- **PSYCHOLOGICAL:** The above threats give power to the batterer's psychologically abusive acts
- **ECONOMIC:** Financial restriction creates multiple complications to leaving an abuser
- P. 4-5

HOW ABUSERS USE POWER AND CONTROL



Domestic violence is not impulsive, but purposeful behavior. The batterer chooses a range of abusive tactics that are reinforced by violence or the constant threat of violence.



The "Power and Control Wheel" was developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minn.

Universal or Routine Screening

*Screening can be a powerful tool,
but if done incorrectly can cause
problems or even be dangerous*

Universal Screening

- Develop a practice and procedure for asking *everyone* about abuse and determining risk
- Ask in a safe environment; this means when you are alone with the person and that there is no way the abuser will hear about her disclosure
- Sometimes, clients will disclose information about previous abusive relationships which could be important information for their treatment plan
- It may take several visits and inquiries before she discloses abuse to you

The Importance of *Always* Screening

- Victims are more likely to seek services from providers other than domestic violence advocates
- Therefore, it is crucial that we have help identifying victims
- Presenting problems that could be coping mechanisms:
 - Substance abuse
 - Depression
 - Suicide
 - Anxiety
 - Signs of PTSD
 - Eating disorders
- If she feels safe, then these symptoms or behaviors may cease

Possible Questions

- Are you afraid of your partner?
- Is someone you love hurting you?
- Has your partner ever harmed you or threatened to hurt you?
- Does your partner hit/shove/choke you?
- What happens when your partner doesn't get his way?
- Does your partner destroy things that you care about, such as family, photographs, clothes or pets?

Possible Questions

- Does your partner watch your every move? Accuse you of having affairs? Call 10 times a day?
- Do you feel safe at home?
- Have you ever been forced to have sex when you didn't want to?
- Do you feel safe in your relationship?
- Does your partner sabotage your friendships or relationships with family?
- Has your partner ever threatened you with a weapon like a knife or gun?

Other Ways to Detect Abuse

- Reports from other agencies
- Family members self-report
- Direct observations of control or physical ailments
 - Excessively quiet and deferential around partner
 - Either partner preferring the worker not speak to the individual alone
 - Repeated unexplained injuries
 - Woman suddenly ending or canceling appointments because partner is expecting her

Response if Abuse Disclosed

- Be supportive and non-judgmental
 - "It is not okay for someone to abuse you no matter what the situation."
 - "You do not deserve to be abused."
 - "The abuse is not your fault."
 - "I am concerned about your safety and well-being."
- Do not promote further victim blaming
- Her responses are normal reactions to a stressful situation
- Strengths-based perspective

Seek Experienced Domestic Violence Advocates

- Call MCADV or refer to MCADV program members in your area for guidance
- We do NOT recommend the following interventions:
 - Couples Therapy
 - Court Mediation
 - Programs for batterers without support for battered women
 - Anger management groups for abusers without other interventions

The Role of Domestic Violence Programs

- There are more than 80 domestic violence shelters and support programs in Missouri, but fewer than half of the state's 114 counties have emergency shelters
- Program staff are used to using creative and inventive approaches to providing services in a variety of settings
- Most women do not need shelter, but almost all can benefit from safety planning and support groups
- Some programs have outreach staff who can work with you to make plans for services in the community
- There is more to be gained by working together

Domestic Violence Provider Services

- Hotline
- Crisis Intervention
- Shelter
- Support Groups
- Ongoing Advocacy
- Court Advocacy
- P. 34-35

The LIFE Process

- Listen
- Inform
- Facilitate
- Empower and Assist Her
- P. 20

EMPOWERMENT

KEY POINT

Empowerment affords a battered woman the opportunity to see herself as a strong survivor who can participate actively in securing a life free from violence.

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What makes it possible for men to entrap women is not their greater physical strength but the social strength they derive when unequal power relationships are reinforced, rather than countered, in helping endeavors.

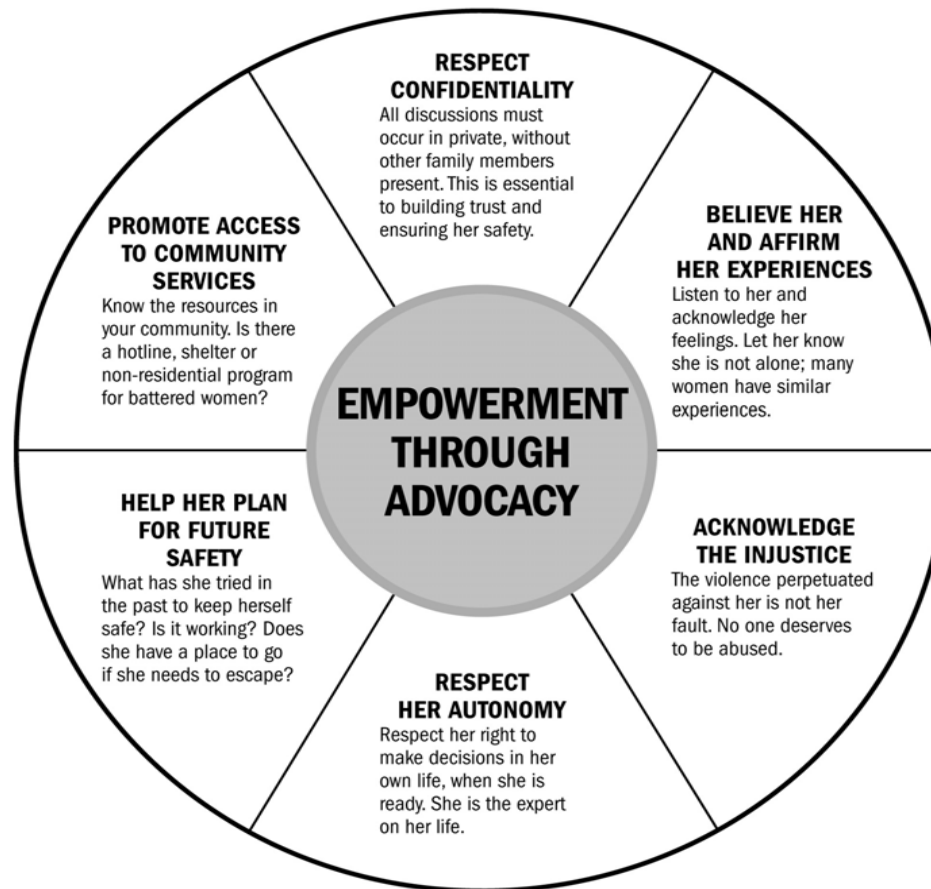


EMPOWERMENT IS THE CORE OF ADVOCACY



In the empowerment model, a woman seeking help is assumed to be a basically healthy person who needs understanding, concrete information, support and resources to make changes.

You should consciously reinforce the expectation that a battered woman can – and will – take charge of her own life.



This is an adaptation of the "Empowerment Wheel" developed by the Domestic Violence Project, Inc., in Kenosha, Wis., and is based on the "Power and Control and Equality Wheel" developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minn.

Systems Advocacy

- How does your program and the systems with which you work protect the safety of battered women and their children?
- What are your formal and informal policies and procedures for addressing domestic violence?
- How can you increase communication and collaboration with the local domestic violence service providers?

Recommended Resources

- Wilson, Karen (1997). *When Violence Begins at Home: A Comprehensive Guide to Understanding and Bridging Domestic Abuse*. California: Hunter House, Inc.
- National Domestic Violence Hotline
 - (800) 799-7233
 - (800) 799-SAFE
- P. 36-37

Ending Comments

- This is a very brief overview of a complicated historical social problem
- Contact MCADV if you have ANY questions or are interested in becoming an individual member to receive publications and attend free trainings such as the June 12th *Woman-Focused Therapy: Strategies for Working with the Domestic Violence Survivor Diagnosed with PTSD, Complex PTSD or Borderline Personality Disorder* workshop
- Seek more specific training if you often work with victims of domestic violence
- Please complete the evaluations